



PRESS RELEASE:

Met Police make 90 Terrorism Act arrests in London Peace Garden - while PSNI make none at Lift The Ban protests in Belfast and Derry



Images: [UK-wide actions, Tuesday](#) | [Ministry Of Justice, Thursday](#) | [Peace Garden, today](#)

The Met Police have [confirmed](#) at least 90 peaceful sign holders were arrested for 'terrorism' offences in a London Peace Garden today. Meanwhile PSNI made no arrests of 21 people in Derry and 20 in Belfast who held the same signs this afternoon saying "I oppose genocide. I support Palestine Action." The Belfast and Derry sign-holders ended their action after an hour or so when it became clear that the police would be taking no action.

Defend Our Juries wrote to the PSNI in advance of the actions so they were fully aware that they would be taking place.

EXPERTS CONCERNED OVER DISPARITIES IN POLICING TERROR LAWS

On Thursday this week, investigative journalism platform *The Detail* [reported](#) that PSNI have made three arrests in relation to alleged support for Palestine Action. Another 13 have been sent letters by the PSNI informing them of open terrorism investigations against them for allegedly showing support for Palestine Action.

At the same time, *The Detail* reports, the PSNI has taken no action “against public displays linked to proscribed loyalist or republican groups, despite several high-profile incidents. These included parades honouring UVF killer Brian Robinson in Belfast in September, and another in Portadown in August for Harris Boyle, a UVF member linked to the Miami Showband Massacre. Both were attended by hundreds of people, with UVF wreaths carried openly.” Jonathan Hall KC, who was appointed by the Home Office as the so-called “Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation” told *The Detail* that the “overtly supportive” displays at these events involved clear potential Section 13 offences.

The Department of Justice and the Executive Office confirmed to *The Detail* that they were “not consulted or asked for any input” regarding the decision to proscribe Palestine Action. The PSNI pointed *The Detail* to a statement by Deputy CC Bobby Singleton to the Policing Board in September, where he said “we had no role in the decision to proscribe (Palestine Action).” Legal experts have said that PSNI need the proscription “like a hole in the head.”

“This is a total dereliction of duty when policing is so sensitive here,” Colum Eastwood, SDLP MP for Foyle told *The Detail*.

A spokesperson for Defend Our Juries said:

“In order to keep the peace, the Police in the North of Ireland regularly turn a blind eye to those showing support for proscribed loyalist or republican groups which have murdered hundreds of people. So it is completely disproportionate that the PSNI have been arresting people and sending warning letters for allegedly showing support for a domestic protest group who has killed no-one and was proscribed only on the basis of criminal damage.

“The fact that the Home Secretary did not consult the authorities in the North of Ireland over the ban is yet another dereliction of duty by Yvette Cooper and the authorities in Westminster.”

“We took action in the Peace Garden in London today because it is a reminder that people acting in the name of Palestine Action only ever acted to save lives, never to take lives.

"It's utterly shameful that the Labour government's authoritarian ban of a protest group has now seen more than 2,350 peaceful protesters arrested in the last few months.

"There are six prisoners who have allegedly taken action with Palestine Action to disrupt the UK-Israel weapons pipeline who are being held in UK prisons beyond the maximum time limit of six months before trial, and who are today entering their fourth week on a collective open-ended hunger strike. One of their demands is to lift the ban on Palestine Action. Despite frequent requests for a meeting to discuss their demands, David Lammy has failed to respond. The prisoners' health is declining and we urge their demands to be immediately met."

The Garden in Tavistock Square is a **memorial and peace garden** with a statue of Mahatma Gandhi, a cherry tree planted to commemorate the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and a Conscientious Objectors' commemorative stone unveiled in 1994 to honour "all those who have established and are maintaining the right not to kill."

Today's protests against the proscription of a domestic direct action group are part of the most widespread wave of civil disobedience in the UK in recent history. So far this week, 279 people have been arrested under the Terrorism Act 2000 for peacefully holding cardboard signs, **bringing the total number of arrests to over 23500 since Palestine Action was proscribed in July 2025.**

Yesterday People Before Profit in Derry issued a [statement](#) explaining their protest and condemning the proscription:

"The proscription of Palestine Action was an act of cowardice by the British government. Instead of challenging an Israeli regime committing genocide and continuing to bomb Gaza, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer sought to silence and criminalise those acting to stop mass slaughter and crimes against humanity.

"We urge people to join the day of action in Derry, Belfast, London and elsewhere calling for the ban on Palestine Action to be lifted and for all charges against those acting to oppose genocide are dropped."

MI6 CHIEF ADDS TO CHORUS OF CONCERN

Yesterday, former director of global counter-terrorism at MI6 Richard Barrett [condemned](#) the UK government's designation of Palestine Action as a terror group and the amount of police time and resources being used to arrest people holding signs which say "I oppose genocide. I support Palestine Action".

This adds to the ever-growing condemnation of the ban from expert bodies both in the UK and internationally, including the release of three reports just last week:

- A panel of experts including a former MI6 director said [terrorism laws needed rewriting](#) as they had become too broad to keep the country safe, hitting out at the ‘serious property damage’ clause” which has resulted in a nonviolent domestic direct action group being designated as terrorists for the first time.
- It was revealed that an advisory body had told ministers that [banning Palestine Action could backfire](#) by inadvertently raising the group’s public profile, becoming “a flashpoint for significant controversy and criticism” of the government, heightening Muslim-Jewish community tensions, and being seen as evidence of bias towards Israel.
- And five UN experts published their letter to the UK government saying the ban is [unjustified, unnecessary and a move more associated with authoritarian states](#).

HUNGER STRIKE ENTERS WEEK FOUR

Both Zarah Sultana MP and Jeremy Corbyn MP have written to Justice Secretary David Lammy to express “deep concern” over the continued remand of activists imprisoned for taking action with Palestine Action, far in excess of the six month pre-trial custody time limit.

Corbyn requested an urgent meeting with Lammy to discuss the open-ended hunger strike of six Prisoners for Palestine, which is nearing its fourth week. Many of them are noting a serious decline in their health, as they continue to refuse food in order to demand immediate bail, the right to a fair trial, an end to censorship and for the ban to be lifted.

NOVEMBER WAVE OF ACTIONS SO FAR

On Tuesday, local police forces arrested just 142 of the 237 people who took action in ten cities across the UK. After several hours forces in Abberystwyth, Truro and Oxford confirmed they would not be returning to arrest the remaining sign-holders. Police Scotland made no arrests of the 49 people who took action in Edinburgh. The police therefore failed to arrest 95 sign-holders.

On Thursday, police confirmed 47 arrests outside the [Ministry of Justice](#), where the Attorney General resides, who has approved the charges of hundreds of peaceful protestors for terrorist offences.

WAVE OF ACTION CONTINUES MONDAY

The wave of actions continues next week as follows:

- **The Home Office (Monday 24th)**
- **The Royal Courts of Justice (Wednesday 26th)**

And on **Saturday 29 November at 1pm** in these locations:

- **Edinburgh, Queen Elizabeth House**

- **Caerdydd (Cardiff)**, location to be announced nearer the date
- **Manchester**, St Peter's Square
- **Birmingham**, Chamberlain Square, B3 3DH (opposite Museum and Art Gallery)
- **Cambridge**, Guildhall, opposite the market: Guildhall Place, Market Hill
- **Bristol**, College Green, BS1 5TJ
- **Sheffield**, Cathedral
- **Exeter**, outside Central Station, Queens Street
- **Lancaster**, outside Lancaster Castle

QUOTES FROM PEOPLE WHO TOOK ACTION IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND

Rosie Maguire, 55, psychotherapist and writer, County Down, explained why she took action in Belfast today:

"I'm taking action in disgust at the ludicrous ban on Palestine Action because it is a cynical attack on civil liberties and on the voices of a growing body of ordinary people who are horrified at the massacre, genocide, ethnic cleansing of an entire people in Palestine, orchestrated by the powerful in our own government and across the world. I contest that it is not terrorism to stand up against the genocide of the Palestinian people. Rather, the ban is part of a wide ranging distraction exercise allowing genocide to continue in Palestine, and an attempt to shut down opposition to the Zionist agenda, to appease the perpetrators and wielders of power elsewhere."

Meabh Ní Laoghaire, 53 year old teacher, from Belfast:

"I have no criminal record. I was born in Cork but ended up in Belfast because I met a lovely person and we did the usual - got married, had children, bought a house, and have jobs. We are so ordinary we are a stereotype."

"But injustice and unfairness makes my blood boil. I am watching the most outrageous violence against a group of people. How can I even stand for this? I read so much about the holocaust against Jewish people and I asked myself what would I do then? Would I fight? Would I hide? And now I know the answer. I would fight. I am fighting. I will always fight."

Eamonn McCann, 82, who helped start the civil rights movement in the North of Ireland by helping organise the October 5th march in 1968 said:

"In 1968, civil rights activists were charged under the Special Powers Act which denied us a jury trial. We veterans are horrified that we have to come out again to demonstrate for civil rights. We are delighted that two generations on, so many young people are joining us on the same streets to stand up for Palestine and for Palestine Action."

Sophia, 29, from Bogside Derry said:

"I will be holding a sign because I believe we in the North of Ireland have a moral obligation to defend our comrades held in British prisons for protesting genocide; we have a moral obligation to Palestine and its resistance to not let the campaigns tire, their morale deplete or their fight to go unheard."

Amanda Crawford, 73, Theatre Actor and Director from Donegal who has worked as a human rights monitor in Palestine and has participated in several Gaza Freedom Flotillas, said:

"I will be taking action in Derry today because of Derry's history of resistance to oppressive, unjust laws, standing up for Civil Rights since the 1960s."

Grainne McLaughlin, Business Owner, Derry said:

"As a family, we march, we rally, we support the Boycott Sanctions and Divestment movement, yet it still feels like it is not enough. In this political moment, too many voices are ignored and too many people feel helpless. We are taking action because silence is not an option. I never want my children to ask what I did. I want them to see now that we stand up, speak out, and do everything we can. Because now it goes beyond solidarity with Palestine, it's about also protecting their right to stand against any injustice they may see or face in their future."

QUOTES FROM PEOPLE WHO TOOK ACTION IN LONDON

Mat Osmond, 60, of Constantine in Cornwall, higher education art lecturer and writer, who was arrested for the second time today said:

"Like so many others, seeing for myself even a little of what's been done in Gaza over the past two years, and at the same time witnessing the British State actively collaborating in that obscene cruelty, has felt like a kind of suffocation."

"The proscription of Palestine Action by the very people collaborating in this genocide marked a turning point. Refusing to comply with this ban now asserts a truth as uncomplicated as breathing. Palestine Action are not terrorists. They are the very opposite of terrorists. The real terrorists here are the ones who shut them in British gaols for acting as if truth mattered."

Carolyn Gelenter, 67, London, who is the Jewish daughter of Holocaust survivor, and was arrested today for a second time said:

"I am taking this action because it is the very nature of what being Jewish means - to stand up and speak out. After deep reflection I felt I had no choice but to again take action again against the genocide, committed in my name and aided and abetted by the

government of the nation I live in. That genocide continues with nearly 300 Gazans killed since the 'peace agreement' as do escalating atrocities in the West Bank. And I am extremely concerned about the erasure of our democratic rights in the proscription of a group who were exercising their right to protest and by designating support for them as terrorism."

Angie Zelter, 74, a peace, environmental and human rights campaigner and Nobel Peace Prize nominee, who has Jewish Israeli family living in Israel, explained why she took action again today:

"Having been in the peace movement for decades, Gandhi and the peace garden are a good place to protest about UK ongoing complicity in genocide. The 'ceasefire' in Gaza is a lie with the Israeli military killing hundreds more Palestinians and refusing to let in all the aid trucks still waiting at the border. There is no practical process in place to set up a Palestinian state. This is why I will be sitting at the Gandhi statue opposing genocide and supporting the right to protest."

From Dave Kilroy, 66, retired cabinetmaker from Plymouth who is taking action at all four protests in London in November said:

"As a guy of a certain age I'm well used to making compromises in order to get by. And it takes a shock to make you wake up and take action. Seeing what was going on in Gaza provided that shock."

"For me these vigils are the best way I can help to stop the Government doing the 'wrong thing' of exporting arms to Israel and proscribing Palestine Action who were taking direct action against Elbit Systems who were making military drones for use on Palestinian civilians. I want the genocide to stop and I want the Government to do the right thing."

BACKGROUND TO LIFT THE BAN CAMPAIGN

So far over 2,350 people have been arrested under terrorism legislation for taking part in these now famous actions in which people sit silently holding handwritten cardboard signs saying "**I oppose genocide. I support Palestine Action.**" Several hundred of these have so far been charged with section 13 offences under the Terrorism Act 2000, offences which carry a maximum six month prison sentence.

The [demands](#) of the Lift The Ban campaign are firstly to lift the ban on Palestine Action and secondly to name the ongoing Israeli assault on the Palestinian people as a genocide and comply with the resulting legal obligations, including by ending all military trade and other military cooperation with Israel.

At the Court Of Appeal ruling on 15 October, Palestine Action co-founder Huda Ammori won two more grounds for her Judicial Review at the same time as the government lost their attempt to block the legal challenge of the ban, making the Judicial Review twice as likely to succeed in overturning the proscription.

Last month the UN issued its draft report [Gaza Genocide: A Collective Crime](#) detailing the complicity of states [including the UK](#) in the destruction of Gaza. Amongst other things, the UK continued to supply arms including components for F-35 stealth bombers, undertook daily surveillance flights over Gaza for Israel, maintained normal trade relations, and allowed Israel to undertake international crimes with impunity.

[The genocide continues](#) to unfold in Gaza. Since October 11, the first full day of the ceasefire, Israel has killed at least 245 Palestinians in Gaza and wounded 627. Israel continues to attack Gaza, with at least three airstrikes on Wednesday. The UN says Israel is blocking vaccines and baby bottles. More than 1,500 buildings beyond the “yellow line” have been destroyed. And in the West Bank yesterday settlers set fire to vehicles, including dairy trucks.

BACKGROUND TO PRISONERS’ HUNGER STRIKE

28 prisoners are currently being held in UK prisons without trial for allegedly taking part in actions claimed by Palestine action. They are known as the Filton 24 and the Brize Norton Five. Most will be held for two years without trial - exceeding the [six month pre-trial](#) custody limit - because the Crown Prosecution Service is claiming there is a “terrorist connection” on the basis of criminal damage. However no charges have been brought under the Terrorism Act against these prisoners and the actions took place before Palestine Action was proscribed by the government.

Six of these prisoners are now on a rolling hunger strike, some are now in their fourth week. The hunger strike started on Saturday 2nd November - Balfour Day - with two people after the Home Secretary failed to respond to [their demands](#) including immediate bail, access to documents necessary for the right to a fair trial and the de-proscription of Palestine Action. The strike is “rolling” because more people continue to join the strike as their demands remain unmet. The conditions of their detention have been criticised by [UN experts](#) in a letter to the UK government.

In August of this year T Hoxa of the Filton 24 went on [hunger strike](#) for 28 days, eventually [winning most of her demands](#). According to Prisoners For Palestine, most of the 33 activists are expected to join the strike in coming weeks, in what could become the largest coordinated prisoners’ hunger strike since the 1981 Irish hunger strike led by Bobby Sands. For more information on the hunger strikers see [Prisoners for Palestine](#).

For more information:

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